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PROGRAMME MATTERS REQUIRING POLICY GUIDANCE FROM THE COUNCIL

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

This document and its addenda set forth a series of programme matters that require policy guidance from the Council. Most of these matters are being brought to the attention of the Council at the Council's own request, as indicated by the various programme decisions adopted by the Council at its fifteenth session. The present document deals with four subjects:

(a) Harmonization of environmental measurements;

(b) Industrial accidents;

(c) Transfer of environmentally sound technology; and

(d) Protection of the ozone layer.

A. Improvement and harmonization of environmental measurements

1. In its decision 14/24, the Governing Council, noting the importance and urgency of enhancing the availability of internationally compatible environmental data, requested the Executive Director: (a) to convene, in 1987 or in early 1988, within available resources, an expert meeting to consider the best means to achieve progress in the improvement and harmonization of environmental measurements; (b) to take account of the outcome of the meeting in his continuing efforts to improve the availability of internationally compatible environmental data, as well as their interpretation; and (c) to report to the Governing Council at its next session, on the outcome of the meeting.

2. A summary of the report of the meeting of experts, held in Munich from 9-11 December 1987, was submitted to the Governing Council at its fifteenth session in document UNEP/GC.15/9/Add.2. Following the recommendation of the meeting the Executive Director initiated a project on the Harmonization of Environmental Measurement (HEM), housed by the Gesellschaft für Strahlen und Umweltforschung in Munich.

3. In its decision 15/38, the Governing Council noted the establishment of the project at Munich; appealed to Governments and international organizations to assist the project to fulfil its objectives by, inter alia, providing financial resources and seconding staff; and requested the Executive Director to report to the Governing Council at its sixteenth regular session on the status of the project.

4. In accordance with the request contained in decision 15/38, Governments and international organizations were contacted to seek support for the project.

5. France has promised to investigate possibilities for support; Canada has promised to send a fact finding mission to Germany to obtain more detailed information on HEM; the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) has promised to support HEM in identifying an expert for the HEM catalogue of databases; and the USSR has promised to support HEM by sending an expert working in the area of geo-ecological classification. By the end of 1990 no Government, apart from that of Germany, had promised direct financial support.

6. The Executive Director appointed a director for HEM in August 1989. An internal "brain-storming" meeting was held in January 1990. A revised concept for HEM, providing a better integrated and internationally co-ordinated mode of action, was developed in line with the recommendations of the experts.

7. The key element in the implementation of this concept is the development and establishment of a catalogue of databases (a "meta-database"). An Expert Group Meeting on the HEM meta-database was held in Munich in July 1990. Experts from eight countries and eleven organizations attended. The participants elaborated the requirements of a central information system on available environmental data, essential for achievement of the objectives of the HEM project.

8. This information system would contribute to the improvement of:

(i) Harmonization of international programmes and activities (by providing information on ongoing activities in the area of environmental monitoring and research);

(ii) Harmonization of "central structures" in the management of environmental data, such as classification systems, analytical methods and models;

(iii) Harmonization of environmental data in specific subject areas.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Gouncil may wish to:

1. Note that with the support of Germany, the office for Harmonization of Environmental Measurement (HEM), has been established in Munich;

2. Further note that apart from the voluntary contributions from the Government of Germany, no other financial contributions have been forthcoming;

3. Request the Executive Director to continue contacting governments to seek support for the project;

4. Appeal to Governments and international organizations to assist the project to fulfil its objectives by, inter alia, providing financial resources and seconding staff;

5. Call upon Governments and international organizations to participate actively in the implementation of the project.

B. Industrial accidents

9. By paragraphs 1 and 2 of its decision 15/39, the Governing Council noted with satisfaction the activities of the Executive Director in the field of industrial accidents and called upon Governments, the United Nations and its specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, other international organizations, non-governmental organizations and world industry to support the APELL process (Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level).

10. By paragraph 3 of the same decision, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director to set up a network of organizations and experts to facilitate the exchange of information and technology for the prevention of industrial accidents and to provide assistance in the case of emergencies and to report thereon to the Council at its sixteenth regular session.

11. As a follow-up, the Executive Director wrote to all Governments on 6 March 1990, asking both for the designation of APELL focal points and for information about activities being undertaken in relation to awareness and preparedness for emergencies.

12. The development and monitoring of the programme is supported by a core group of experts, which meets twice a year. A senior level expert advisory group meets every two years to evaluate achievements and future plans. The second meeting of the senior level expert advisory group was held in Paris on 3-5 December 1990 to review and evaluate progress made so far and to recommend directions for the programme over the next three years.

13. A detailed report of the progress made in implementing APELL was prepared for the senior level expert advisory group meeting and is available on request. The main points are as follows:

(a) Since the APELL programme was launched in December 1988, over 6,000 copies of the APELL Handbook have been distributed in English, French and Spanish. The original print run of 4,500 copies in English was sold within three months. Proceeds from these sales are now financing new printings. The Handbook has also been translated into and published in Chinese, Italian, and Russian. Arabic and Portuguese translations are being considered by certain countries and organizations;

(b) Furthermore, six Seminar/Workshops have been held, both at the regional level (in Mexico for 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries), as well as at the local or national level (in Bahrain, Brazil, Colombia, the Philippines and Tunisia). A total of 633 participants from Government, industry and academe took part. In connection with the Seminar/Workshops, technical assessment missions were carried out in Colombia and Tunisia. Apart

from the visual aid package describing APELL, a series of associated comments is being prepared with support from a number of countries, as well as industry. Experiences and useful information on APELL-related activities are reported and exchanged in the APELL Newsletter, issued twice a year;

(c) APELL has been introduced and/or discussed in 20 conferences or workshops organized by other organizations (IAEA, ILO, IMO, UNIDO, WHO, World Bank, OECD, ICC). Co-operation and joint activities have been or are being undertaken with IAEA, OECD, UNDRO and UNIDO. APELL representatives participate in working groups of ILO, WHO, and OECD. Co-operation has been particularly effective with ILO, WHO, and OECD. Important contributions to the programme - financial and in kind - have been made by Governments, industry and other organizations. Industry has made available one full-time senior consultant, seconded from the chemical industry;

(d) Sixty-four countries have responded to the Executive Director's request, either by designating an APELL focal point or by describing their activities in the field of awareness and preparedness for industrial accidents. The responses showed a great interest in the subject and assistance from UNEP was requested for training, the provision of adequate documentation and the provision of technical expertise;

(e) Work on the preparation of an "International Directory of Emergency Response Centres" is being carried out in co-operation with OECD, whose programme entitled "Accidents Involving Hazardous Substances" includes the preparation of such a directory. For its part, UNEP circulated a questionnaire prepared for the purpose to all member Governments. Up to the beginning of December 1990, over 30 replies had been received and analysed. It is expected that a first draft of the directory will be ready for publication later in 1991.

14. The 35 senior-level experts at the meeting held in Paris in December 1990 made the following recommendations (the full Summary Report of the meeting is available on request):

(a) Complementary components should be added to the APELL programme; in particular, the "prevention" aspect should be given greater emphasis;

(b) Field activities should continue; in particular, follow-up assistance should be provided to countries that have already initiated APELL activities and new national and local APELL activities should be launched;

(c) General back-up should be increased, through the provision of technical documentation on risk and hazard identification, plant siting and safety audits. The APELL Newsletter should be continued;

(d) The International Directory of Emergency Response Centres should be completed and published as soon as possible;

(e) Governments and industry should continue to support the APELL programme; some participants at the meeting announced committments by their Governments to further support the programme.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to:

1. Note with satisfaction the progress made in developing the APELL process (Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level) and in initiating concrete local and national activities for enhancing public awareness and preparedness;

2. Call upon Governments, the United Nations and its specialized agencies, other international organizations, non-governmental organizations and world industry to continue to support the widespread implementation of the APELL process to all industrial areas through generous financial contributions or technical assistance;

3. Note the progress made in identifying organizations and experts capable of providing information and assistance in the case of emergencies;

4. Request the Executive Director to:

(a) Continue to develop the APELL process and promote its implementation by providing expertise, advice and technical assistance where action has been initiated, by the preparation of the necessary publications and by supporting human resources development in this field;

(b) Continue developing the network for the exchange of information and technology for the prevention of industrial accidents and the provision of assistance in the case of emergencies, with particular emphasis on the prevention aspect.

III. Transfer of environmentally sound technology

15. In its decision 15/37 of May 1989, the Governing Council urged UNEP to continue its catalytic role to promote, with Governments, industry, research organizations and other relevant institutions, the establishment of a network that would allow the transfer of environmental protection technology. This mandate was later reinforced both in decision SS.II/9/IX, entitled "transfer of environmentally sound technology" and in decision SS.II/4B on "comprehensive approach to hazardous waste" adopted by the UNEP Governing Council at its second special session in August 1990.

16. In response, a programme has been developed since May 1989 to implement decision 15/37 with the support of an advisory group of experts from Governments, industry, academia and other international organizations (UNIDO, OECD, ICC/IEB). A senior-level expert seminar was hosted by the United Kingdom Government in Canterbury from 17-20 September 1990 to review and evaluate progress made to date, and to recommend future orientations for the programme for the next three years. The seminar was attended by 154 participants from 34 countries and 20 international organizations.

17. A detailed report of the Canterbury seminar is available upon request. The main outcomes of the seminar are summarized below.

18. The "cleaner production" terminology was chosen, as it was felt that it embodied a more global approach to address all phases of the life cycle of a product or production process, with the objective of preventing or minimizing

short and long-term risks to humans and the environment. This includes a "cradle to grave" approach, minimizing wastes and emissions into air, water and soil, as well as minimizing energy consumption and the use of raw materials.

19. The Cleaner Production Programme has been developed in a first stage with the objectives of increasing awareness on cleaner production, networking the various existing sources of information on the subject, and increasing the dissemination of this information to all decision makers, involved in industrial development in all parts of the world. To this end, the cleaner production has three major elements: (a) a computerized Clearing-house to facilitate the sharing of information - the International Cleaner Production Information Clearing-house (ICPIC); (b) working groups composed of international leading experts on cleaner production in specific industrial sectors or on particular issues; and (c) a cleaner production newsletter.

20. The International Cleaner Production Information Clearing-house (ICPIC) has been set up, using the United States system. ICPIC is a computer-based information exchange system, which now has more than 450 case studies of cleaner production methods; a bibliography of over 400 frequently referenced publications; a directory of international experts; a calendar of training events, seminars and meetings; and descriptions of industry waste minimization programmes. ICPIC works as a decentralized system. Information is collected and shared by users of the system. Its purpose is to act as a "pointer" system, providing basic, descriptive information on cleaner production processes and pointing the way to sources of more specific information (companies, research and academic organizations, technical institutions, networks, individuals). Users of ICPIC can communicate with specialists and other users, privately or publicly, through ICPIC's message centre.

21. Eight working groups of international specialists have been established: to collect industry-specific information on cleaner production technologies and experts, working groups were created for four highly polluting industrial sectors: leather tanning, textiles, metal finishing, solvents. Two new groups on the petroleum and pulp and paper industries respectively have also been created. The information that the working groups gather is made available world-wide through ICPIC.

22. In addition, a working group on data networking was entrusted with the task of preparing a standard format for the case studies stored in the database so as to facilitate information exchange. The format is now used by the industry sector working groups and other case study contributors for input to ICPIC. Finally, a working group on policies, strategies and instruments was established in co-operation with OECD, focusing initially on regulatory and non-regulatory incentives for the promotion of cleaner production.

23. A newsletter, "Cleaner Production", issued twice a year in English and French, reports on experiences and activities on cleaner production in the world and serves as a link between the various partners involved. It is disseminated through UNEP and other channels (UNIDO, OECD, Governments themselves).

24. Co-operation and joint activities to promote cleaner production have been or are being undertaken with OECD, ILO, UNIDO, and CEC. Significant contributions, financial and in-kind, were made to the programme by Governments and industry.

25. The main recommendations from the Canterbury seminar were:

(a) To continue and increase gathering and processing information on cleaner production within the framework of the ICPIC scheme;

(b) To continue the activities of the existing working groups and to establish others in additional industry sectors;

(c) To develop further the dissemination of information on cleaner production world-wide;

(d) To support the initiation and development of national cleaner production programmes in different regions of the world and to develop the necessary training activities and materials. "Seed projects" in a few countries should be promoted as a first step to assisting others to establish their own national cleaner production programmes; and

(e) To continue networking with international and other organizations.

26. In the same areas, the Executive Director has continued his consultations with the Japanese Government concerning the establishment of a Japan-UNEP Technology Centre in Japan, as announced by the Japanese delegation during the fifteenth session of the Governing Council. In these consultations a special effort is being made to avoid duplication of efforts already undertaken by the Executive Director and relevant units of UNEP and other United Nations organs and organizations.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to:

1. Note with satisfaction the progress in the gathering, processing and world-wide dissemination of information on cleaner production by the International Cleaner Production Information Clearing-house (ICPIC), and the inputs from the working groups in UNEP Cleaner Production Programme;

2. Also note with appreciation the progress towards the establishment of the Japan-UNEP Technology Centre;

3. Call upon Governments, NGOs, industry associations and academics to develop and initiate cleaner production activities and to participate in their implementation;

4. Call upon the Executive Director:

(a) To support, within UNEP Cleaner Production Programme, the initiation and development of cleaner production activities in different regions;

(b) To develop educational and training activities to help institutions and Governments in developing Cleaner Production Programmes;

(c) To pursue his consultations with the Japanese government to ensure that the proposed Centre complements but does not overlap with the current activities of the Industry and Environment Office.

IV. Protection of the ozone layer

27. Currently, 73 countries and the EEC are Parties to the Vienna Convention and 65 countries and the EEC are Parties to the Montreal Protocol. The Amendment to the Montreal Protocol has been accepted by two countries: Canada and New Zealand. It will enter into force on 1 January 1992, provided that at least 20 instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval of the Amendment are received before that date. The adjustments to the Montreal Protocol were officially circulated by the depositary to all Governments and will enter into force on 7 March 1991.

28. Significant progress since the last special session of the Governing Council in August includes efforts in establishing the Interim Financial Mechanism in accordance with decision II/8 of the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (London, 27-29 June 1990); reconvening of the international assessment panels to review new scientific, environmental, technical and economic information on the depletion of the ozone layer that has been acquired since the completion of the first assessment process in August 1989 and to compile supplementary reports for review by the Parties at their Fourth Meeting in 1992; and the convening of three meetings:

(a) In accordance with decision II/15 of the Second Meeting of the Parties, the Fifth Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Montreal Protocol to consider problems arising under the trade provisions of the Protocol (Nairobi, 3-5 December 1990);

(b) In accordance with decision II/9 of the Second Meeting of the Parties, the First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the Reporting of Data to consider the causes of difficulties faced by some countries in reporting data as required by Article 7 of the Protocol (Nairobi, 6-7 December 1990); and

(c) Pursuant to decision II/5 of the Second Meeting of the Parties, the First Meeting of the Implementation Committee under the non-compliance procedure for the Montreal Protocol (Nairobi, 10-11 December 1990).

29. The Executive Committee of the Interim Multilateral Ozone Fund held two meetings, the first from 19-21 September 1990 and the second from 17-19 December 1990 in Montreal. The major steps taken in the establishment of the Interim Multilateral Ozone Fund include the decision of the Committee to establish the account of this Fund in UNEP in accordance with the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations and to have the Fund administered by the Executive Director of UNEP. The account established with UNEP would receive contributions to the Fund and would make transfers from it according to directives provided by the Executive Committee. The Committee also decided to accept the offer of the Government of Canada to place the Fund Secretariat in Montreal, as well as the offer of that Government to cover any additional costs of locating and operating the Secretariat in Canada relative to costs associated with UNEP Headquarters.

30. The Committee decided on the candidate for Chief Officer of the Fund Secretariat from the candidates screened by the Recruitment Committee that had been established by the Executive Committee. The criteria for project eligibility and guidelines for the implementation of activities supported by the Fund were discussed and will be developed further at subsequent meetings of the Committee. The Committee also discussed the elements of the provisional budget for 1991 and requested the Chief Officer of the Fund Secretariat to develop a draft budget for consideration by the Committee at its third meeting.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to:

1. Recall its decision SS.II/2 of 3 August 1990 on the new progress in the protection of the ozone layer;

2. Note with satisfaction the progress being made with regard to the implementation of the decisions of the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (London, 27-29 June 1990), including the establishment of the Interim Multilateral Ozone Fund;

3. Encourage States to ratify, accept or approve the Amendment to the Montreal Protocol adopted by the Parties at their Second Meeting so that the Amendment can enter into force on 1 January 1992;

4. Urge the States Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol to pay their contributions towards the Trust Fund for the Vienna Convention and the Trust Fund for the Montreal Protocol to enable the Ozone Secretariat to implement the decisions of the Parties;

5. Endorse the efforts of the Executive Director in establishing the Interim Multilateral Ozone Fund and request him to undertake any necessary actions to ensure the best operation of that Fund under the authority of the Executive Committee of the Parties; and

6. Urge the States Parties to the Montreal Protocol to pay their due contributions towards the Interim Multilateral Ozone Fund as soon as possible so that the Fund will become fully operational and so that the various activities under the Fund can be conducted in a timely manner.

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Corrigendum

1. Page 5

The heading before paragraph 15 should read

C. Transfer of environmentally sound technology

2. Page 8

The heading before paragraph 27 should read

D. Protection of the ozone layer

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